

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 SAJ-01

ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SAM-01 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 /076 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6997

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6695

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 8)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SP

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORM

1. I CALLED ON SECOND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT ALFONSO OSORIO MORNING SEPTEMBER 1 TO OBTAIN A RUNDOWN ON THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESENT PLANS FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORM.OSORIO IS VERY CLOSE TO BOTH SUAREZ AND TO THE KING AND IS IN A POSITION TO KNOW WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS PLANNING. OSORIO SAID THAT HE WAS SPEAKING WITH ME CONFIDENTIALLY AND I SHOULD THEREFORE APPRECIATE HIS REMARKS BEING CLOSELY HELD.

2. I TOLD OSORIO THAT I WAS ANXIOUS TO HAVE A RUN-DOWN OF THE SITUATION BEFORE RETURNING TO THE UNITED STATES, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE PRESS WAS REPORTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT DELAY THE REFERENDUM UNTIL NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER. IT WOULD THEREFORE BE HELPFUL TO KNOW HOW HE SAW THE GOVERNMENT'S REFORM PROGRAM DEVELOPING.

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3. OSORIO SAID THAT QUITE TO THE CONTRARY OF PRESS

REPORTS, THE GOVERNMENT WANTED TO ACCELERATE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THE ENTIRE PROCESS. HE SAID THAT FINAL DECISION REGARDING THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM WOULD BE MADE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 15 AND POSSIBLY EARLIER. THE GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED TO WITHDRAW PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'S PROJECT FOR CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM AS BEING TOO DETAILED AND TOO COMPLICATED FOR SUBMISSION TO REFERENDUM. THE PLAN NOW WAS THAT PRESENT GOVERNMENT WOULD SUBMIT A MUCH SIMPLER AND SHORTER REFORM LAW TO THE CORTES WHICH, FOLLOWING CORTES APPROVAL, WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO REFERENDUM. SUBSEQUENT TO THE REFERENDUM, GENERAL ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD FOR A NEW CORTES AND THAT CORTES WOULD THEN UNDERTAKE THE PROCESS OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM, INCLUDING THE FORMATION OF A TWO-CHAMBER PARLIAMANTAR OSORIO SAID THAT THIS NEW CORTES COULD NOT BE DESCRIBED SPECIFICALLY AS A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY SINCE THE REFORM LAW TO BE APPROVED BY THE CORTES AND THEN BY REFERENDUM WOULD SET FORTH CERTAIN PRINCIPLES WHICH WOULD GUIDE THE NEW CORTES IN ITS WORK. OSORIO DID NOT INDICATE ANY SPECIFIC DATES FOR EITHER THE REFERENDUM OR THE ELECTIONS, BUT HE DID EMPHASIZE THAT NEWSPAPER REPORTS CONCERNING A REFERENDUM IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER WERE ERRONEOUS AND IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO DO EVERYTHING IT COULD TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS.

4. OSORIO SAID THAT THE FINAL GOVERNMENT DECISION WAS BEING POSTPONED UNTIL AFTER COORDINADORA DEMOCRATICA HELD ITS MEETING IN MADRID ON SEPTEMBER 4 AND ISSUED ITS DOCUMENT. THE GOVERNMENT WANTED TO SEE WHAT POSITION THE OPPOSITION PARTIES WERE GOING TO TAKE AND HE CLEARLY IMPLIED THE HOPE THAT THE COORDINADORA DOCUMENT WOULD BE SUFFICIENTLY MODERATE TO PERMIT SOME AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION.

5. OSORIO EMPHASIZED THAT DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION WAS CONTINUING AND MEETINGS INDEED WERE SCHEDULED THIS WEEK WITH A CONFIDENTIAL

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VARIETY OF OPPOSITION LEADERS, INCLUDING RUIZ GIMINEZ.

THE PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE IN THE GOVERNMENT-OPPOSITION DIALOGUE CURIOUSLY CAME AT THIS TIME FROM GIL ROBLES, BUT HE BELIEVED THAT GIL ROBLES WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY IRRELEVANT. WHEN I ASKED ABOUT RUIZ GIMENEZ, OSORIO SAID THAT HE HAD BECOME INCREASINGLY MODERATE AND INDEED WAS VERY ACTIVE IN SEEKING A

CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GOVERNMENT. OSORIO MADE CLEAR THAT HE CONSIDERED THE POSITION OF RUIZ GIMENEZ AS A RESPONSIBLE ONE AT THIS TIME AND QUITE IN DISTINCTION TO THAT OF GIL ROBLES.

6. OSORIO ADDED THAT THE PRINCIPAL DIFFICULTY WITH THE OPPOSITION WAS ITS INSISTENCE THAT THE COMMUNIST PARTY BE LEGALIZED AND FULLY INTEGRATED INTO THE POLITICAL SYSTEM. WHILE PRIVATELY SOME OF THE OPPOSITION LEADERS UNDERSTOOD THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION, THEY CONTINUED PUBLICLY TO DEMAND THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S LEGALIZATION AS A PRICE FOR AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT. OSORIO SAID FLATLY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT PREPARED TO PAY THIS PRICE.

7. WITH REGARD TO VARIOUS POLITICAL GROUPS, OSORIO TOLD ME THAT EFFORTS WERE BEING MADE NOT ONLY TO CREATE A MODERATE GROUPING ON THE RIGHT BUT ALSO TO BUILD A BIG CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY. WITH REGARD TO THE LATTER, GIL ROBLES WAS ALSO A PROBLEM. PRESS REPORTS THAT PPD LEADER ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT BUILDING A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY WERE NOT ALTOGETHER CORRECT, AND HE THOUGHT ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA WOULD ISSUE A CLARIFICATION. THE CREATION OF LARGER POLITICAL GROUPINGS WAS A MOST IMPORTANT OPERATION TO AVOID THE DANGERS OF PROLIFERATION AND FRAGMENTING OF POLITICAL GROUPS.

8. WHEN I ASKED HIM WHY THE PRESS SEEMED TO BE TAKING SUCH A PESSIMISTIC VIEW ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM, HE SAID HE THOUGHT THAT CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE OPPOSITION WERE DOING WHATEVER THEY COULD TO SOW

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CONFUSION. HE MENTIONED, IN PARTICULAR, FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER AREILZA, WHO HE SAID WAS PRESENTING HIMSELF AS THE KING'S MAN IN A DIALOGUE WITH OPPOSITION PARTIES. THIS WAS PATENTLY ABSURD SINCE IF HE HAD BEEN THE KING'S MAN HE, NOT SUAREZ, WOULD BE PRIME MINISTER. OSORIO MADE CLEAR THAT AREILZA'S ACTIVITIES WERE ANYTHING BUT HELPFUL TO THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS.

9. OSORIO CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT A SMALL GROUP OF FIVE MINISTERS (PRESUMABLY SUAREZ, OSORIO, MARTIN VILLA, LAVILLA AND OREJA) FORM A POLITICAL STEERING GROUP AND WAS NOW DEVELOPING IN GREATER DETAIL WHAT HE HAD GIVEN TO ME IN OUTLINE. HE AGAIN MADE THE POINT THAT HE HAD TAKEN ME INTO HIS CONFIDENCE IN

GIVING ME AN OUTLINE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

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